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of the net and supporting it with a stick. Some corn is placed as bait on the ground inside the net and the hunter then hides himself in a nearby bush. Should some fowl enter the net, the hunter hits the stick supporting the flap with a stone, thus closing the trap, or he simply begins to shout; the fowl flies up, the net is detached from the branch and falls on top of the prey.

While most of the before-mentioned traps can be easily handled by a single man, in some cases, especially in big game hunt, the cooperation of several hunters is necessary. Huge camouflaged pitfalls (*tŭng bóng*), mostly with sharp spikes at the bottom — made of a small, but very hard kind of bamboo (*po yóng tsu*) — were constructed for trapping elephants and rhinos. For catching the latter, a spot in the jungle had to be located first, where a rhino would habitually come to answer its call of nature. Lepcha hunters claim that the rhino then usually begins to walk backwards and easily falls into a pit.

To catch leopards or tigers alive, a heavy cage with a trap door was constructed; in this case, a living bait was used. Small cages with trap doors are sometimes placed in the fields, to catch monkeys who cause damage to the crops.

The hunting of wild pigs is often carried out by a group of hunters. At first, rows of huge bamboo spikes are erected under a cliff and a number of men, forming a beating line, try to chase the wild pigs towards the cliff, from where they eventually drop on the spikes set below.

Occasionally beating lines are formed to drive animals towards a line of archers. In the driving hunt, fire is never used as the Lepchas fear that a fire in the jungle might get easily out of control and become a danger to men and their property.

Fishing

A few among the Lepchas, mostly those whose dwellings lie close to a mountain river, practise fishing, but as in hunting, fishing also

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226 serves only to supply some food in addition to that obtained by tilling the fields and raising cattle. The following fishing devices are used by the Lepchas:

An ordinary fishing rod (*vór ham*) of bamboo, with a string and an iron hook (*vór*), upon which a bait is placed. — Similar to this is a simple device, certainly more ancient, called *hryeng*. Here the hook is substituted by a short, sharp piece of bamboo, which gets stuck in the throat of the fish.

Sometimes, a series of baited hooks is immersed in a river. The end of every line is wound around heavy stones lying on the bank and each string is then bent to form a sharp angle, being held in this position by a small stone. Should a fish get caught, the line will be moved out of its position and the fisherman who after some time comes to control the trap will thus recognize that a fish has been hooked.

226 Various kinds of nets, mostly made of the fibres of creeper plants,
226 are used; the most frequent type of net is the so-called *sŭng li*, a conical throwing net. When spread out it is in the average some 140 cms high and its diameter measures approximately 160 cms. Around its opening, oblong pieces of lead are fastened and a long, strong rope is attached to its upper part. The fisherman, standing in the river, winds the rope loosely over his arm and then at a favourable moment throws the net quickly over the fish.

226 *Tŭk shor*: A simple bamboo trap, in the average some 60 cms long and 30 cms in diameter. To construct this device, a strong piece of bamboo is cut lengthwise, to three quarters of its total length, into a great number of sections. These sections are then bent apart and held in this position by a woven bamboo ring, the trap thus taking the form of a funnel. — Usually, several *tŭk shor* are placed in a row, near a stony barrier in the river, where fish are likely to jump and might thus fall into the trap, fig. 1.

Kŭr vyo: A pocket, made of bamboo; also the *kŭr vyo* is fastened to a barrier in the river, to catch the fish who are trying to jump the obstacle.

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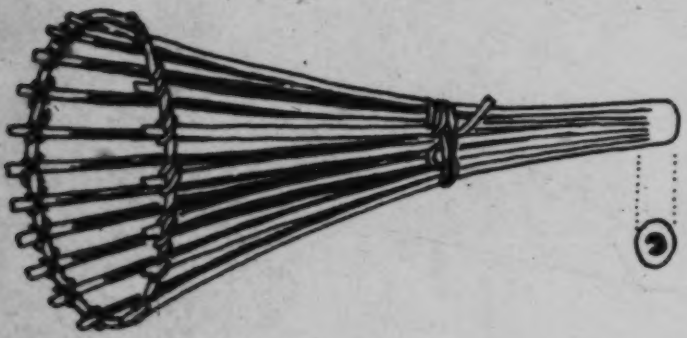

Fig. 1. A simple bamboo trap.

Ról or *Yet*: A huge chute made of bamboo, which is placed close o a small waterfall, above the surface of the river. Its planks are et wide apart to allow the water, which falls on it from above, to low quickly away, while bigger fish are left dry on the boards.

Fit: A narrow-woven bamboo basket with long spikes at its pening, which are turned towards the inside of the trap, preventing he fish, which had entered the basket, from leaving it again. The it is placed into the water and held down by a stone, placed on op of it. The fish, which has been caught, is removed through a lit in the bottom of the basket; this opening is afterwards closed gain with the help of a bamboo string.

A heavy stone or hammer is used to hit the stones under which ome fish have taken refuge. The dazed fish are then caught by and or with the help of a net. This method is mostly applied luring the dry season, when the streams are very low. — Occasion-lly, Lepcha fishermen use also bow and arrow to kill fish.

For the following methods of fishing, the cooperation of several ishermen is required:

A stone barrier is erected across a river, leaving only one opening

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226 in the wall, into which a huge, narrow-woven basket is placed. A beating line is then formed and the fish are driven into the trap.

226 278 At a favourable spot, by diverting a river into a channel and then erecting barriers of sand and stone, a small artificial lake is made in the old river bed. Afterwards, huge quantities of *a'ung el* (*Artemisia vulgaris*) are collected, placed into the lake and pounded. Then cut pieces of a strong creeper (*brŭng*) are thrown into the pool, and the juice of these plants disolving in the water will poison all the fish which had been trapped in the artificially made lake.

226 All the catch, obtained by collective methods of fishing, is eventually divided equally among the participants.

NOTES

113 1. About the Lepchas see the following publications:

Hooker, J. D., Himalayan Journals. London 1854.

Mainwaring, G. B., A Grammar of the Rong (Lepcha) Language. Calcutta 1878.

Das, Kali Kumar, The Lepcha People and their Notions of Heaven and Hell. Journal of the Buddhist Texts Society, Vol. VI, Pt. 1. Calcutta 1896.

Mainwaring, G. B. and Grünwedel, A., Dictionary of the Lepcha Language. Berlin 1898.

de Beauvoir-Stocks, C., Folk-lore and Customs of the Lep-chas of Sikhim. Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Proceedings. Calcutta 1925.

Gorer, G., Himalayan Village. London 1938.

Morris, J., Living with Lepchas. London 1938.

de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, R. and Gorer, G., The use of thread-crosses in Lepcha Lamaist Ceremonies. Eastern Anthropologist, Vol. IV, No. 2. Lucknow 1951.

de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, R., Ancient Funeral Ceremonies of the Lepchas. Eastern Anthropologist, Vol. V, No. 1. Lucknow 1951.

2. The rites and beliefs, connected with Lepcha hunting and fishing, will be dealt with later in a separate publication.

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mountain regions he is called Mo-nom-dju, for it is he who leads the chamois and the wild sheep, Mo-nom, to the hunters. In the lower hills he is called Se-go-bu-log-dju and delivers up stag, bears and other game. In the lower plains he is called Se-wing-dju, or the one who helps capture the game of the plains. Gom-shi and Gom-yu-rum are hunting gods and it is they who instil in the hunters the passion for hunting. The god of the hunters is worshipped exclusively by the men and the women do not in any way participate in the worship. We shall consider the details of this sacrifice at a later stage.

The Rong claim that "Rum-zong-pa-no gave them bows, arrows and knives and taught them how to shoot fish."

The wife of Rum-zong-pa-no is Na-li-pun-di who instructed the women in the arts of farming, weaving and taught them housework and the use of the sickle. Sa-dju is another god venerated as god of agriculture. If a housewife who is possessed by Sa-dju dies, the spirit continues to possess one of her daughters even though the daughter may have in the meanwhile left the family through marriage. This deity appears to the women in dreams in the guise of an old man. If the apparition has a large goitre it augurs well for a rich harvest. If on the other hand it has no goitre at all it omens a bad harvest.

We already know from myths related earlier, that the Lepchas were given the first seeds by higher beings. These seeds were gaguni, which has the appearance of a millet-like maize; sama, a kind of white millet; goya, dry rice, and mokai, red maize. The dog plays an important role in the obtaining of rice and hence the Rong give, each time, some portion of the rice they eat to the dog. We have noticed how, after a meal of rice, the remnants are scattered on the floor, and the dogs, which otherwise are not allowed inside the house, came in and ate the rice. The sacrifice to the god of agriculture is usually offered by the housewife. Nevertheless the man can offer the sacrifice if for some grave reason the woman is unable to do so. Man is not altogether excluded from the performance of the sacrifice, as is the case with the women in the sacrifice to the god of the hunters.

The family or household god is Rum-fat, who is the protector of domestic animals. The two gods of procreation,

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Besides the knowledge of edible objects the Rong are well acquainted with poisons. They know the secret of a deadly poison for making poisoned arrows. A fairly thick layer is smeared on the lower half of the arrow head but none whatsoever on the point. A very slight wound is enough to kill any animal. The great advantage of this poison is that it does not enter the blood stream but acts locally so that the entire flesh is not poisoned. The injured portion has necessarily to be cut away. The poison consists of a very complicated mixture of ingredients which points to the long experience the Lepchas have in its manufacture. The first ingredient, "Father of the poison" called ning-dyūd, is obtained from Tibet. The theory is that a bird scrapes out of the earth a peculiar root, eats part of it and gains immense strength. The Tibetans collect the remainder of the root and trade with the Lepchas who prepare the poison. Death quickly ensues if even the tiniest fragment of the root is consumed. Another ingredient, bar-lang, is a root, which, in the language of the Rong, is called rog-log. The third ingredient is obtained from gōn-chong. Neither of the roots is found in the high mountains but has to be procured from the neighbourhood of the plains. Yet another root is called se-red in Lepcha, and ga-gra in Nepalese. In addition there is the poison extracted from the root of a shrub which bears a yellow flower, and whose name the hunter could no longer remember. Gōn-liong-rik serves as the "conduct" for these poisons. So potent is the effect of this poison that a person is liable to lose his life even if he inhales the odour it gives off for too long a period. Without the admixture of the poison from Tibet, the other poisons cannot be localised and the entire flesh of the animal would be rendered unedible. Thus we see that the poison for arrows is very complicated and the process of preparation is known only to the Rong. The other people fear them because of this knowledge of poisons.

The fruit of the above-mentioned rog-log is called rog-log-pot, and only a very few people are in a position to procure it. A strong poison is made from it. A poison for the killing of fish is called bū-rū. This is obtained from the leaves of the gol-gung tree by rubbing them down in a mortar. The poison, if thrown into a tank, kills all the fish but in no way makes them inedible.